



Security Council

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Report of the Secretary-General concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1339 (2001) of 31 January 2001, by which the Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) until 31 July 2001 and requested me to report three months from the date of the adoption of the resolution. The present report provides an update on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, since my report of 24 April 2001 (S/2001/401).

2. My Special Representative for Georgia, Dieter Boden, continues to head UNOMIG. He is assisted in his task by the Chief Military Observer, Major General Anis Ahmed Bajwa (Pakistan). The strength of UNOMIG, as at 12 July 2001, stood at 106 military observers (see annex).

II. Political aspects

3. It will be recalled that in April and May the security situation in the UNOMIG area of responsibility deteriorated, owing to hostage-taking incidents and increased activity by illegal armed groups in the Gali district, resulting in the suspension of the peace process at the request of the Abkhaz side. However, on 11 May, following efforts by my Special Representative and the UNOMIG Chief Military Observer, the Georgian and Abkhaz sides handed over the remains of those killed on 7 and 8 April and there was an exchange of all detainees (see S/2001/401, paras. 19-21). The lessening of tensions that followed prepared the ground for the seventh session of the Coordinating Council's working group 1 on security

matters, which was held on 10 July in Sukhumi under the chairmanship of the Chief Military Observer. In a joint statement, the sides resolved to work together in a spirit of mutual trust in order to avoid further breaches of the Moscow Agreement, to reduce criminal activity and to bring criminals to justice.

4. Regrettably, on 8 and 9 July — nine days before the thirteenth session of the Coordinating Council was to be held in Tbilisi — two serious incidents, in which six people were killed and two taken hostage, occurred in the Gulripsh area, north-west of the Kodori Valley, outside the UNOMIG area of responsibility. In an official statement on 12 July the Abkhaz side accused the Georgian side of involvement in these tragic incidents and cancelled its participation in the meeting of the Coordinating Council. At the same time, it refused to take part in a seminar on State-legal aspects of the settlement of the conflict — a follow-up to the Pitsunda discussions of February 2001 (see S/2001/401, paras. 5 and 33) — which was to have been held on 16 July under the auspices of the Council of Europe and in the framework of the United Nations-led peace process.

5. Work on the fundamental issue of the future status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia intensified following the Security Council meeting of 24 April and the statement of the President of the Council of the same date (S/PRST/2001/12). The group of Friends of the Secretary-General, in close consultation with my Special Representative, has intensified its efforts to finalize the draft paper on the distribution of competences between Tbilisi and Sukhumi with a view to submitting this framework document to the sides in the near future so as to initiate meaningful negotiations on the future political status of



Abkhazia. My Special Representative visited Moscow in the middle of July for meetings with high-ranking representatives of the Russian Federation, in its capacity as facilitator. The Abkhaz authorities have reiterated their well-known position that any discussion of the status issue is obsolete because, in their view, the political status of Abkhazia was conclusively decided upon with the Act of State Independence of 1999.

6. Notwithstanding the unstable security situation in the zone of conflict, the process of return of internally displaced persons to the Gali region has continued steadily. Early in May my Special Representative submitted to the two sides for their consideration the report of the joint assessment mission to the Gali district of 20 to 24 November 2000 (see S/2001/59, para. 8 and annex II, and S/2001/401, para. 34). Both sides have informally indicated that they consider the report to be an objective representation of the situation and have expressed willingness to discuss the practical implementation of recommendations contained in it.

7. One major confidence-building step was taken on 15 June, when the Abkhaz side, in the presence of representatives of UNOMIG and the International Committee of the Red Cross, handed over to the Georgian side for reburial, the mortal remains of 15 Georgian soldiers killed in combat near Sukhumi in 1993. Only minor progress on the implementation of the Yalta Programme of Action (see S/2001/401, paras. 6 and 7) or that of projects agreed upon earlier was recorded. The Georgian/Abkhaz Coordinating Commission and its Executive Secretary, Zurab Lakerbaia, are to be commended for their contributions to the implementation of projects related to confidence-building and the rehabilitation of infrastructure. However, there is a growing tendency by the Abkhaz side to link the realization of confidence-building measures with security guarantees.

8. In the course of June, a reshuffling of the *de facto* Abkhaz government took place. On 7 June, Anri Jergenja, who has been intimately involved in the Georgian-Abkhaz negotiation process since 1992, was appointed "Prime Minister".

III. Operations of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

9. The Mission continues to carry out its mandate by means of daily ground patrols from its headquarters in

Sukhumi and the two sector headquarters at Gali and Zugdidi, as well as through regular helicopter patrols. By these means, UNOMIG is able to cover its entire area of responsibility, with the exception of the upper Kodori Valley, where patrolling remains suspended for security reasons.

10. During the reporting period, UNOMIG visited the lower Kodori Valley on five occasions. On two of those patrols, the UNOMIG military observers were escorted by the peacekeeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). A detailed regime for patrolling the upper Kodori Valley area, to be implemented as soon as the security situation allows, has been agreed upon between the Chief Military Observer and the Georgian Minister of Defence.

11. The series of hostage-taking incidents which started early in April required extensive efforts by UNOMIG to bring the two sides together at the highest political level to prevent further escalation of the situation. Although the exchange of detainees on 11 May somewhat defused the tension, abductions and incidents of violence continued, as described in paragraph 4 above.

12. The Joint Fact-finding Group has recently been hamstrung in its investigations because two of the delegates from the Abkhaz side continue to refuse to attend its meetings on the grounds that the Georgian authorities have failed to take adequate measures to prevent the activities of illegal armed groups in the Gali region. Similarly, the Georgian authorities have failed to provide essential evidence in the case of some investigations. Failure to fully cooperate in these investigations is a breach of the protocol of 19 January 2000 under which the Joint Fact-finding Group was created (see S/2000/39, para. 5). Following the joint statement signed during the seventh session of working group 1, both sides have expressed readiness to strengthen their cooperation with the Joint Fact-finding Group. In the period under review, despite the lack of good will on the part of both sides to make effective use of the mechanisms offered by the Coordinating Council framework, the Group concluded its investigations in three cases, namely, the ambush of a fuel truck on 25 January 2001 in which one person was killed (see S/2001/401, para. 17); an anti-tank missile attack on 26 January 2001 (*ibid.*) and a mine explosion in which five children were injured at the beginning of April 2001 (*ibid.*, para. 19).

IV. Situation on the ground

13. Criminality and lawlessness continue to be major destabilizing factors in the conflict zone, putting in jeopardy the overall security situation. Complaints have repeatedly been lodged by the local population in both sectors about terrorizing and intimidation by armed groups. Although the crime rate remains high, some improvement in the security climate is noticeable and may be attributed to the initiative of the Abkhaz militia to conduct more effective patrols in the lower Gali area. During the reporting period, there were 9 shooting incidents, 21 killings, 10 abductions, 5 mine blasts and 45 robberies.

14. The situation deteriorated on 6 May, when an Abkhaz customs officer was stopped while driving a vehicle and subsequently taken to the Georgian side of the ceasefire line by five or six armed men. After preliminary unofficial negotiations, a meeting facilitated by UNOMIG and chaired by the Chief Military Observer was held on 11 May at the main bridge over the Inguri River, which led to the signing of a protocol. The Georgian side committed itself to consider the evidence gathered by the Abkhaz authorities on three Georgian nationals suspected of murder and other serious crimes (see S/2001/401, para. 20), so as to decide whether to institute criminal proceedings against them. It was also agreed that UNOMIG would verify the implementation of the protocol and that it would render assistance to the sides in this regard. Immediately after the meeting, the exchange of hostages took place on the Inguri bridge.

15. On 12 May, an Abkhaz soldier was killed at his observation post. The Abkhaz side once more claimed partisan involvement. UNOMIG investigations indicated, however, that the shooting had resulted from a brawl among drunken soldiers.

16. Repeated violations of the Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces of 14 May 1994 and restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNOMIG give rise to concern. One such violation occurred in June in the course of the NATO/Partnership for Peace military exercise "Cooperative Partner 2001", hosted by the Georgian armed forces and conducted at the Kulevi military manoeuvre area, south of the UNOMIG area of responsibility. On that occasion, Georgian armoured personnel carriers and helicopters were observed operating in the restricted weapons zone and the Mission's freedom of movement

was restricted in the Kulevi area. In another instance, on 23 June, two Abkhaz armoured vehicles entered the restricted weapons zone from Ochamchira during a military exercise. In another violation of the ceasefire agreement by the Georgian side, on 7 July an armoured personnel carrier was seen in the security zone. Protests were lodged with the sides for all violations, and official replies are expected.

V. Security situation

17. The security and safety of UNOMIG personnel remains an issue of high priority to the Mission. During the period under review, three instances of break-ins at residences of UNOMIG personnel were reported and two attempted break-ins were thwarted. Early in July, two local UNOMIG employees were attacked and severely beaten by a group of intoxicated men while returning home in Gali town. In response to these security threats, UNOMIG security officers and local law enforcement agencies have stepped up their patrolling activities in the vicinity of houses occupied by UNOMIG personnel, and their security systems have also been upgraded. In addition, the threat of mines continues to be of great concern. UNOMIG relies on the assistance of the HALO Trust to dispose of the mines.

18. On 9 July, in response to an enquiry by my Special Representative, the Georgian Minister for Special Assignments, Malkhaz Kakabadze, stated that the Georgian law enforcement agencies had initiated a criminal case against two individuals suspected of involvement in the hostage-taking of United Nations observers and that measures were under way to arrest other people involved in the incidents.

19. In violation of the Moscow Agreement, there is a disturbing tendency by the two sides to restrict the movement of UNOMIG personnel, thereby hindering the ability of the Mission to fulfil its mandate. One such serious instance of obstruction by the Abkhaz authorities occurred on 30 April, when Abkhaz military personnel aimed a grenade launcher at a UNOMIG helicopter circling an Abkhaz observation post. When a UNOMIG team later visited the post, the soldiers confirmed that they had indeed aimed weapons towards the helicopter and that they had fired once in the air with a light weapon. A formal protest was lodged with the *de facto* Abkhaz Minister of Defence, who assured UNOMIG of his determination to take appropriate

action. On 14 June, the Georgian side prevented UNOMIG military observers from entering a part of the restricted weapons zone. One day later, UNOMIG was also advised against conducting helicopter flights over parts of its area of responsibility because of the NATO military exercises. After a protest by UNOMIG, the situation was rectified.

20. Moreover, the trend to hold UNOMIG personnel hostage to domestic problems is increasing alarmingly (see S/2000/1023, para. 18; S/2001/59, para. 18; and S/2001/401, para. 24). On 30 April, the UNOMIG Zugdidi Liaison Team was detained for about four hours by a demonstration of some 100 internally displaced persons waiting to receive their allowances from the Zugdidi Post Bank. The internally displaced persons demanded that the team contact the Minister for Distribution of Allowances and requested that he conduct negotiations with them. Upon the arrival of the police and local authorities, negotiations started and the team was released. However, the internally displaced persons threatened to destroy the UNOMIG Zugdidi sector headquarters on 11 May if they did not receive their allowances by 10 May. Despite repeated requests from UNOMIG, the Georgian authorities failed to take adequate measures to safeguard against such a threat. On 11 May, a demonstration was held outside the Zugdidi sector headquarters, preventing the movement of traffic in and out of the compound. A quick response from the police prevented any damage. My Special Representative and the Chief Military Observer have both raised the matter at the highest level in order to guarantee better security for UNOMIG in Zugdidi.

VI. Cooperation with the collective peacekeeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States

21. Working relations between UNOMIG and the CIS peacekeeping force remain good and close liaison is being maintained at all levels. This includes security backup on the ground by the peacekeeping force, as well as collaboration in the context of the weekly quadripartite meetings, working group I and the Joint Fact-finding Group. UNOMIG and the CIS peacekeeping force continue to exchange information, particularly in the field of incident investigation.

22. As previously reported, the CIS peacekeeping force maintains stationary checkpoints and carries out little patrolling. Lately, however, it has begun to patrol more actively in the lower Gali area in an effort to increase the effectiveness of its operations. This has had a positive impact on the security situation.

VII. Humanitarian situation and human rights

23. During the reporting period, the humanitarian situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, remained serious. International humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations continued to address the acute food and medical needs of vulnerable segments of the population and to conduct mine clearance and small-scale rehabilitation activities.

24. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) initiated community-based rehabilitation of 14 schools requiring urgent attention in the upper and lower Gali regions. UNHCR plans to expand its assistance programme to other schools. This followed a needs assessment conducted by UNHCR staff, who visited 29 schools in the Gali region and found that they lacked heating, water and sanitary facilities, and that they were running without adequate teaching aids and furniture. Despite such deplorable conditions, the schools were attended by close to 4,000 pupils in the school year 2000/2001. UNHCR further noted that, owing to the lack of appropriate health-care facilities and medicines in the Gali region, returnees were often compelled to commute to places of previous displacement for treatment. Accordingly, the rehabilitation of selected dispensaries and water purification systems will also be considered this year. The UNHCR programme is focused on the Upper Gali region; operations in lower Gali are restricted to three places only.

25. The International Committee of the Red Cross continues its essential food distribution programme to vulnerable segments of the population and has recently embarked on a project to partially rehabilitate the water and sanitation systems in Sukhumi and Ochamchira. Médecins sans Frontières-France is expanding the scope of its tuberculosis treatment programme and its health access programme. The HALO Trust has recently expanded its demining operations in the

Ochamchira region. Première Urgence is supporting the rehabilitation of an orphanage in Sukhumi.

26. The increase in tensions in April and May negatively affected the freedom of movement of humanitarian agencies, who were advised to take additional precautions. The security environment also continued to impede access to the Kodori Valley. The activities of international non-governmental organizations continue to be hampered by restrictions on the use of the border crossing between Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Russian Federation at the Psou River (see S/2001/401, para. 28).

27. During the period under review there were no indications of improvement in the field of human rights. The major issues of concern to the United Nations Human Rights Office in Abkhazia, Georgia, remain violations of the right to life, the right to physical integrity and the right to liberty and security of person. The office reported new cases of apartment evictions and violations of the right to property. In addition, complaints were lodged about continuing persecutions on religious grounds. The number of abductions, with or without demands for ransom, has markedly increased, which again raises the issue of the inadequacies of Abkhaz law enforcement structures to deal effectively with such incidents.

28. As documented by the joint assessment mission (see S/2001/59, annex II), the human rights situation remains particularly precarious in the Gali region. There has been no change in the language policy in schools with predominantly Georgian-speaking students: the Georgian language is taught only for a limited number of hours and Russian has been instituted as the language of instruction in the first six grades (from 7 to 13 years). It seems that the situation warrants the opening of a branch office of the human rights office in Gali, as recommended by the joint assessment mission.

VIII. Financial aspects

29. By its resolution 55/267 of 14 June 2001, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of \$27,896,341 (gross), equivalent to \$2,324,695 per month, for UNOMIG for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002. The assessment of these amounts is subject to the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Mission.

30. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNOMIG beyond 31 July 2001, as recommended in paragraph 39 below, the cost of maintaining the Mission until 31 January 2002 would be limited to the monthly amounts approved by the General Assembly.

31. As at 30 June 2001, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMIG Special Account amounted to \$15.9 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to \$2.3 billion.

IX. Observations

32. The interruption of negotiating activities following the killings and hostage-taking incidents in April-May and again in July demonstrates that the overall peace process remains fragile. This is also related to the fact that meaningful negotiations on the future political status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia have not yet begun. Clearly, in the absence of such negotiations, the entire peace process remains in jeopardy. In this context, the progress achieved within the group of Friends on streamlining its position with regard to the draft paper on the distribution of competences between Tbilisi and Sukhumi is encouraging. I appeal to the group of Friends, in close cooperation with my Special Representative, to bring this process to successful completion, so as to submit the framework document to the two sides as soon as possible. The Abkhaz side should reconsider its position not to address the status question.

33. Attempts to hold the peace process hostage to political demands are a cause for concern. Within the United Nations-led peace process, mechanisms have been created through which incidents can be investigated immediately and in close cooperation with the two sides. Both parties should make more effective use of these arrangements, especially in times of crisis. Both sides should show genuine commitment to working together in order to clarify the incidents of 8 and 9 July, release the hostages still being held and bring the perpetrators to justice. I urge them to resume their work in the Coordinating Council and its relevant mechanisms as soon as possible.

34. The pledge by the two sides to facilitate a safe, secure and dignified return of all refugees and internally displaced persons to their places of previous

permanent residence, as stipulated in the Quadripartite Agreement on the Voluntary Return of Refugees and Displaced Persons of 4 April 1994, still awaits realization. I call upon both sides to take up this commitment with renewed determination. An area in urgent need of action is the Gali district, where internally displaced persons have returned despite precarious security conditions. Following the presentation to the sides of the report of the joint assessment mission to the Gali district, the swift implementation of its recommendations should follow.

35. Confidence-building measures are an indispensable part of the peace process and should be addressed in their own right, without conditions relating to other matters under negotiation. I invite the parties to follow up on their Programme of Action, as agreed during the Yalta meeting in March 2001 (see S/2001/242), and to implement the proposals in a purposeful and cooperative manner.

36. The Moscow Agreement remains a cornerstone of the United Nations peace effort. The increasing number of violations of this Agreement in the period under review gives rise to grave concern. The same applies to restrictions of movement imposed on UNOMIG, which prevent the mission from carrying out its mandate to the full. I appeal to both sides to immediately reinstate full compliance with all the stipulations of the Moscow Agreement.

37. The security of UNOMIG personnel remains a matter of deep concern. It is the responsibility of both sides to provide appropriate security conditions for the work of the Mission at all times. The intention expressed by the Georgian authorities to initiate an investigation into the kidnapping incidents in the Kodori Valley and bring to justice the alleged perpetrators is welcome and its implementation awaited.

38. Ongoing violence is a constant threat to the peace process. Both sides bear direct responsibility for the implementation of all the provisions of the protocol of 11 May and for full compliance with all security arrangements concluded earlier to preclude any further aggravation of the situation. I remind the Georgian side in particular to uphold its commitment to put a stop to the activities of illegal armed groups crossing into Abkhazia, Georgia, from the Georgian-controlled side of the ceasefire line.

39. As developments over the last six months have shown, UNOMIG continues to play a crucial role in the stabilization of the zone of conflict. Its efforts to advance the negotiation process constitute a central element in the search for a peaceful settlement. I therefore recommend that its mandate be extended for a further six-month period, until 31 January 2002.

40. I would like to express appreciation to my Special Representative and to the Chief Military Observer for their leadership of UNOMIG, and to commend the men and women of the Mission for their courage and their steadfastness in carrying out their challenging and at times dangerous tasks in the cause of peace.

Annex

**United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia: contributions
as at 12 July 2001**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Military observers</i>
Albania	1
Austria	2
Bangladesh	7
Czech Republic	5
Denmark	5
Egypt	3
France	3
Germany	11
Greece	4
Hungary	8 ^a
Indonesia	4
Jordan	6
Pakistan	8 ^b
Poland	4
Republic of Korea	3
Russian Federation	3
Sweden	5
Switzerland	4
Turkey	5
Ukraine	3
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7
Uruguay	3
United States of America	2
Total	106

^a Including the Deputy Chief Military Observer.

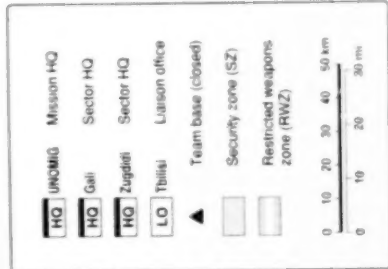
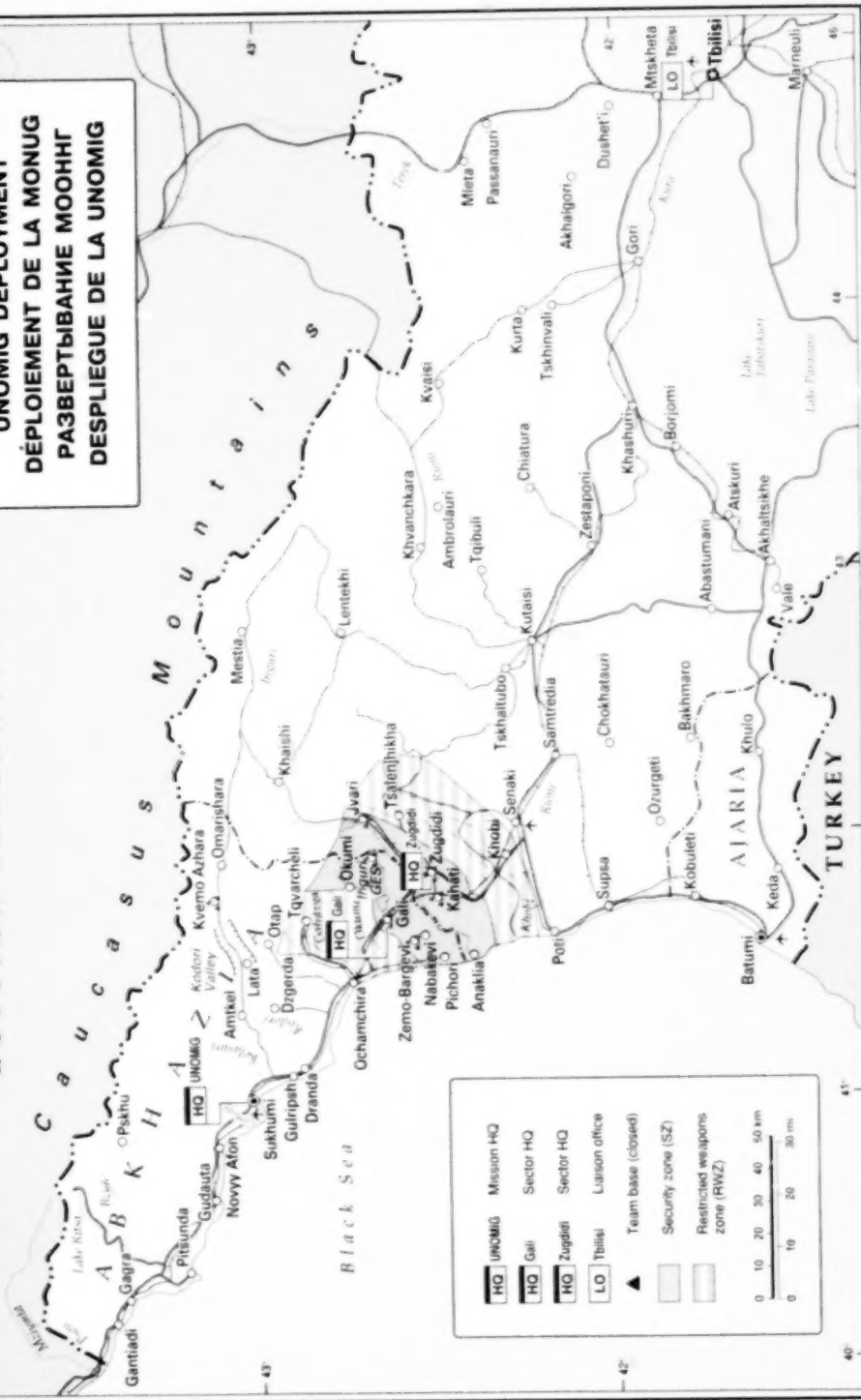
^b Including the Chief Military Observer.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

وزع بعثة مراقبي الأمم المتحدة في جورجيا
联合国观察团部署情形

UNOMIG DEPLOYMENT
DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA MONUG
РАЗВЕРТЫВАНИЕ МООННГ
DESPLIEGUE DE LA UNOMIG



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**Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations
Interim Force in Lebanon**

(for the period from 23 January to 20 July 2001)

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1337 (2001) of 30 January 2001, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for a further period of six months, until 31 July 2001. Matters covered in my interim report of 30 April 2001 (S/2001/423) are not repeated here, except as necessary.

II. Situation in the area of operation

2. The situation has been marked by general stability throughout most of the UNIFIL area of operation, with the exception of ongoing tensions and serious breaches of the Blue Line connected to the dispute over the Shab'a farms area (see para. 5 below). Throughout the reporting period, there continued to be numerous minor ground violations of the line, those from the Israeli side largely attributable to construction of a technical fence along the line, and those from the Lebanese side to crossings by shepherds and occasional vehicles.

3. As reported in April, Israeli aircraft violated the line on an almost daily basis, penetrating deep into Lebanese airspace. These incursions, particularly those at low level breaking the sound barrier over populated areas, were especially provocative and caused great anxiety to the civilian population. The air violations are ongoing, despite repeated démarches to the Israeli authorities by myself, other senior United Nations

officials and a number of interested Governments. A pledge on 28 June by the Israeli Minister of Defence to my representatives in the region, Terje Roed-Larsen and Staffan de Mistura, to stop at least the flights over cities deep inside Lebanon, has yet to be fulfilled.

4. Demonstrators on the Lebanese side gathered regularly at the points of friction identified in my report of 22 January (S/2001/66), Sheikh Abbad Hill east of Hula and Fatima gate west of Metulla, to throw stones and other objects at Israeli personnel across the line. This activity generally drew smaller crowds and was of a lower intensity than in the previous reporting period. However, there were two incidents in which Israeli soldiers fired their weapons, injuring three demonstrators. On 24 May, in an unrelated incident, a small civilian aircraft, whose pilot had taken off without permission from Beirut airport, was shot down by the Israeli air force after entering Israeli airspace and apparently failing to respond to warnings; the pilot did not survive.

5. In addition to the serious breaches of the Blue Line in the Shab'a farms area on 16 February and 14 April (see S/2001/423, para. 4), there were serious violations of the line during the reporting period. On 29 June, Hizbollah fired four missiles and 14 mortar and smoke rounds at two Israeli positions on the line south-east of Kafr Shuba, wounding two Israeli soldiers, one seriously. The Israel Defence Forces responded with heavy artillery and mortar fire, and eight air-to-ground missiles, towards the Lebanese side of the line in the same vicinity. Two days later, on 1 July, Israel Air Force jets destroyed a Syrian army



radar position in the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon, wounding one Lebanese and two Syrian soldiers. An hour after that, Hizbollah responded with 42 mortar rounds at four Israeli Defence Force positions, again in the Shab'a farms area. Israel further responded with some 190 artillery, mortar and tank rounds. The exchange of fire lasted two hours. Tension in the area has remained high following these incidents.

6. Civil administration in the south was somewhat strengthened during the reporting period, with local administration and the central authority in Beirut taking a more active role. Communications, health and welfare systems, as well as postal services, made further slow progress towards integration with the rest of the country. The 1,000-strong contingent of the Lebanese Joint Security Force, comprising army and internal security forces, continued to operate in the areas vacated last year by Israel. This force carries out patrolling and policing of local communities.

7. The Government of Lebanon continued to maintain the position that, so long as there is no comprehensive peace with Israel, the Lebanese armed forces will not be deployed along the Blue Line. Areas along the Blue Line were monitored by Hizbollah through a network of mobile and fixed positions. In some instances, Hizbollah acted as surrogate for the civil administration by extending social, medical and educational services to the local population.

8. On several occasions, Hizbollah personnel restricted the freedom of movement of UNIFIL and interfered with its redeployment. In the most serious manifestation of this interference, Hizbollah first prevented UNIFIL for several weeks from taking up a fixed position south-west of Rmaich, despite the written consent of the Lebanese authorities to the establishment of the UNIFIL position, then put its own position right next to that of UNIFIL. The Hizbollah post was removed from the immediate vicinity of the UNIFIL position only after concerted and prolonged pressure on the Lebanese authorities. In several other cases, Hizbollah erected observation posts adjacent to UNIFIL positions, putting the security of UNIFIL troops at risk.

9. The focus of UNIFIL operations remained on the Blue Line and the adjacent area, where UNIFIL sought to maintain the ceasefire through patrols, observation from fixed positions and close contact with the parties,

the latter with a view to correcting violations and preventing escalation.

10. A controversy arose between the Israeli authorities and the United Nations over a UNIFIL videotape, filmed on 8 October 2000, of vehicles that may have been used by Hizbollah in the abduction of three Israeli Defence Force soldiers on 7 October 2000 across the Blue Line (see S/2000/1049, para. 5). Israel and Lebanon have been offered the opportunity to view the tape, with the identities of non-United Nations personnel obscured, on United Nations premises. I have initiated an investigation into the internal handling of the matter.

11. In some villages in the south, tensions developed between local residents and former members of the dismantled South Lebanese Army who had returned home after serving their terms in prison for collaboration with Israel. Isolated incidents of harassment against these returnees were reported, allegedly committed by local residents claiming that the former South Lebanese Army members had been treated too leniently by the military court.

12. UNIFIL continued to assist the civilian population in the form of medical care, water projects, equipment or services for schools and orphanages and supplies of social services to the needy. This assistance was provided from resources made available by troop-contributing countries. The UNIFIL medical centres and mobile teams provided medical care to an average of 4,500 civilian patients per month. A field dental programme treated approximately 600 cases per month. Veterinary assistance has been extended to some villages within the UNIFIL area of operation. UNIFIL cooperated closely on humanitarian matters with the Lebanese authorities, United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other organizations and agencies operating in Lebanon.

13. The clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance in southern Lebanon gained additional momentum. The Government of Lebanon convened an international high-level workshop on mine clearance on 21 and 22 May with the participation of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and representatives of the donor community. The United Arab Emirates pledge of \$50 million for mine clearance in the south was announced. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations addressed the workshop in his capacity as head of the United Nations Mine Action

Service. A Regional Mine Action Coordination Cell established by the United Nations Mine Action Service in Tyre continued to coordinate United Nations activity in mine-clearing and the United Nations Mine Action Service cooperated closely with the National Demining Office of Lebanon. The United Nations Development Programme continued to lead the efforts of the United Nations system in working with the Lebanese authorities for the development and rehabilitation of the south.

14. A number of civilian casualties of mine incidents were recorded. Since January, two civilians have died and 15 have been injured as a result of exploding mines and ordnance. During the reporting period, UNIFIL demolished more than 1,000 mines and rounds of unexploded ordnance.

III. Organizational matters

15. The reconfiguration and redeployment of UNIFIL proceeded as set out in my interim report. The repatriation of the Nepalese battalion and the Polish Engineering Company are currently under way and will be completed by 31 July 2001. The Nepalese sector has been taken over by the Fijian battalion. The Finnish battalion has been reduced by 107 troops and will repatriate 218 more by 31 July. In its redeployment, UNIFIL is closing a number of rear positions and moving troops into closer proximity to the Blue Line. A map showing the current deployment of UNIFIL is attached.

16. As a result of those changes, with effect from 1 August 2001 the Force will return to a strength of around 4,500 and will be composed of troops from Fiji (593), Finland (310), France (234), Ghana (785), India (792), Ireland (609), Italy (45), Nepal (11 staff officers only), Poland (514) and Ukraine (650). The departure of the Irish and Finnish contingents in the autumn will bring the strength of the Force to about 3,600. UNIFIL was assisted in its tasks by 51 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. In addition, UNIFIL employed 371 civilian staff, of whom 127 were recruited internationally and 344 locally.

17. Major General Seth Kofi Obeng concluded his tour of duty as Force Commander on 15 May 2001. Since then Brigadier General Ganesan Athmanathan has been acting as Force Commander. The process of selecting his successor is under way. Staffan de Mistura

continued to act as my Personal Representative in Beirut.

18. I regret to report the death of three members of the Force. A Finnish soldier was killed in an accidental fall, a Nepalese soldier died of natural causes and an Indian soldier was accidentally killed during a training exercise. Since the establishment of UNIFIL 238 members of the Force have lost their lives, 78 as a result of firings or bomb explosions, 101 as a result of accidents and 59 from other causes. Firing or mine explosions wounded a total of 344.

IV. Financial matters

19. My second revised budget for UNIFIL for the financial period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 (A/55/482/Add.1) amounts to \$207.2 million and reflects reduced requirements arising from the reduction of the Force to 4,500 by 31 July 2001. The General Assembly, in its resolution 55/180 B of 14 June 2001, approved my reduced budget for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. In that resolution, the General Assembly also authorized me to enter into initial commitments for UNIFIL in the amount of \$106.2 million covering the period from 1 July to 31 December 2001, pending submission of my proposed budget for the Force for the full 2001-2002 period during the main part of the Assembly's fifty-sixth session. The Force's initial resource requirements will be met within the commitment authority of \$106.2 million.

20. As at 31 May 2001, unpaid assessments to the Special Account for UNIFIL for the period since its inception to 31 December 2001 amounted to \$163.1 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to \$2,320.1 million.

V. Observations

21. The situation along the Blue Line, except in the sector adjacent to the Shab'a farms area, remained generally calm. Most of the violations of the line were minor and quickly corrected once UNIFIL had raised them with the party concerned. The greatest cause of concern remained the attacks across the line in the Shab'a farms area, deliberate acts in direct breach of the decisions of the Security Council. The persistent

Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace have created additional tension.

22. The events that occurred from 29 June to 1 July, described above, indicate the dangers inherent in the situation, which also have the potential to threaten the stability of the region. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that all parties concerned respect the Blue Line as called for by the Security Council, cease all violations thereof and desist from any action that could serve to destabilize the situation.

23. The Government of Lebanon has taken some further limited steps to restore its authority in the former Israeli-controlled area. Although the Lebanese army and internal security forces are present in the area, the Government of Lebanon has continued to let Hizbollah operate close to the Blue Line. More steps should be taken by the Government to ensure the return of effective Lebanese authority throughout the south, including the deployment of its army. A more energetic and concerted effort to restore basic services to the population, and the full return of the local administration, should be integral to this process.

24. It will be recalled that I visited the region in June 2001, when I had discussions on the aforementioned issues with the political leadership in Lebanon and Israel. In meetings with President Emile Lahoud and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon I stressed the need for all parties to respect the Blue Line, and appealed to both sides to keep the situation calm.

25. In a letter dated 9 July 2001 (S/2001/677), the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations conveyed to me his Government's request that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of six months. In the light of conditions prevailing in the area, I support the extension and recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNIFIL until 31 January 2002.

26. In making this recommendation, I must again draw attention to the serious shortfall in the funding of the Force. At present, unpaid assessments amount to \$163.1 million. This represents money owed to the Member States contributing the troops that make up the Force. I appeal to all Member States to pay their assessments promptly and in full and to clear all remaining arrears. I should like to express my gratitude to the Governments contributing troops to the Force for their understanding and patience.

27. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the commanders and men and women of UNIFIL for the manner in which they have carried out their task.

